

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 3-AUSA TODAY
25 November 1985

Spy cases: USA 'gets serious'

By Sam Meddis
USA TODAY

Spy charges against a Navy intelligence officer, his wife and an ex-CIA worker — all within two days last week — are added proof of the USA's new approach to espionage.

"The year of the spy" is what National Security Council consultant Roy Godson calls 1985.

The new arrests — following eight others this year — are the result of a "terrific" counterspy crackdown by the USA over several years, said Georgetown University intelligence expert Allan Goodman.

"I wouldn't be surprised if we saw one arrest a month for the next year," he said. "The government has finally gotten serious about counterintelligence."

The groundwork for stepping up prosecutions — while protecting national secrets — was laid by then-Attorney General Griffin Bell late in the Carter administration.

"We worked out a way to try espionage cases like trade se-

crets cases," Bell said. For example, a federal judge — after receiving a national security clearance — can decide in private what classified trial information will be sealed.

Bell expects to see an increase in spy cases because "we're being more aggressive" — and foreign governments are desperate for secrets, particularly our high technology.

But the biggest victim of this year's spy scandals may be the USA's credibility — a "real crisis of confidence" in the ability of government agencies to preserve secrets, Goodman said.

"If all this is going on, they can't be doing a very good job of screening their people," he said. "People aren't going to

trust intelligence anymore."

The government is trying to change that image. The John Walker spy case — with the arrests of four current and former Navy men — was a "watershed," Godson said.

"A consensus is beginning to form" that the USA should start protecting national secrets better, Godson said.